REMARKS

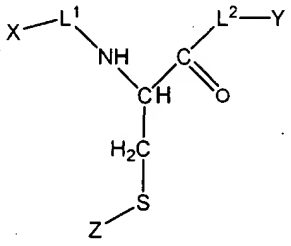
A. Status of the Claims

Claim 26 is amended and claim 27 is cancelled without prejudice to future prosecution. Therefore, claims 1, 5, 9, 26, and 78 are currently pending after entry of this amendment. Claim 26 has been amended merely to clarify that which Applicants regard as their invention. Therefore, no new matter is added with this amendment.

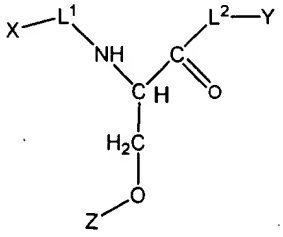
B. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph - written description

Claims 1, 5, 9, 26, 27, and 78 have been rejected as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The Examiner asserts that the specification does not provide support for the claimed reagents. Applicants respectfully disagree.

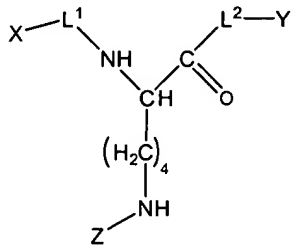
Applicants submit that the subject matter of claim 1 is generally and specifically described within Applicants specification. Claim 1 recites, "-L^3-Z is an optionally protected amino acid side chain having a pendant reactive group, said reactive group selected from the group consisting of lysine, cysteine, serine, aspartic acid, glutamic acid, and threonine." Thus, where the chemical structures of the various -L^3-Z optionally protected amino acid side chains are incorporated directly into the formula of claim 1, the following structures result:



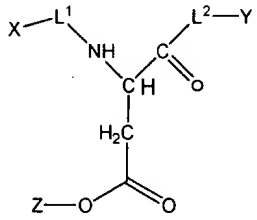
(optionally protected serine amino acid side chain),



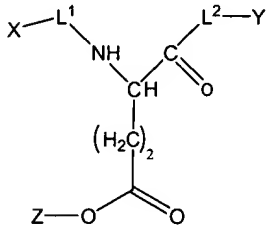
(optionally protected cysteine amino acid side chain),



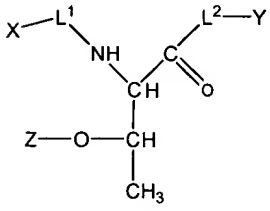
(optionally protected lysine amino acid side chain),



(optionally protected aspartic acid amino acid side chain),

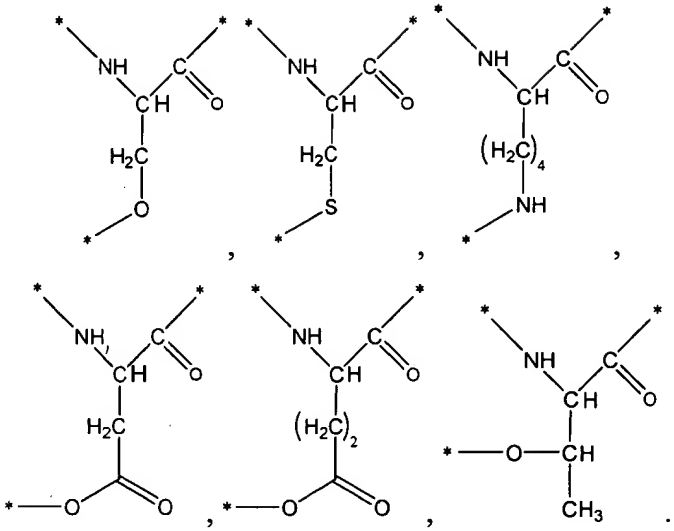


(optionally protected glutamic acid amino acid side chain),



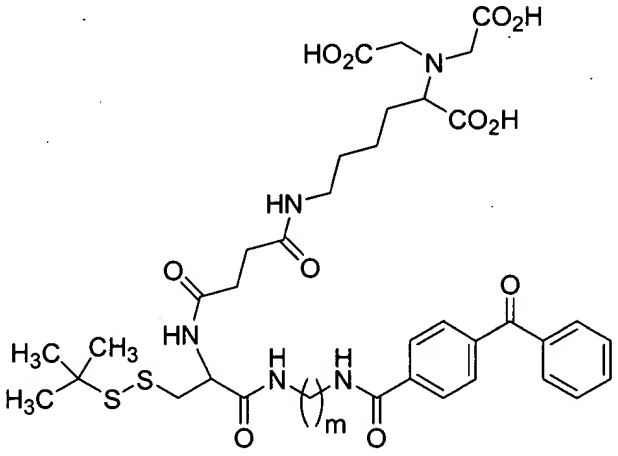
(optionally protected threonine amino acid side chain).

The same compounds are described, for example, at page 23, lines 19-21, stating "the core component is the ***residue of an amino acid*** having ***a reactive functional group*** in the side chain (e.g. lysine, serine, aspartic acid, glutamic acid, cysteine, and the like)" (emphasis added). The general structure of an amino acid is defined as H_2N-CH(R)-COOH, wherein R is an amino acid side chain. See Voet and Voet, Biochemistry, 2nd Ed. (1995), page 57. Where R is a side chain of serine, cysteine, lysine, aspartic acid, glutamic acid, and threonine, then "the ***residue of an amino acid*** having ***a reactive functional group*** in the side chain" would have the following respective structures:



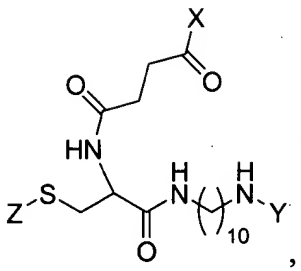
These residues may be directly overlaid onto the claimed reagent structures detailed above. Therefore, claim 1 is fully supported by the general description of the reagents of the present invention.

Moreover, at page 65, line 10, Applicants disclose compound **x**, having the structure:

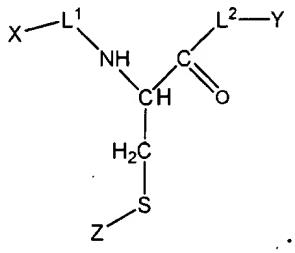


x

which is within the scope of Applicants' elected species having the formula:



which is within the scope of presently pending claim 1, wherein $-L^3-Z$ is an optionally protected cysteine amino acid side chain:



Because claim 1 is fully supported by both specific examples (e.g. compound **x**) and the general description of the reagents of the present invention (e.g. page 23, lines 19-21), Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the written description rejection.

C. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph - indefiniteness

Claims 26 and 27 have been rejected as indefinite. Applicants note that claim 27 has been cancelled, thereby mooting the rejection with respect to that claim. As recommended by the Examiner, Claim 26 has been amended to reflect that "X" specifically binds to a protein tag portion of the "Protein" moiety shown in the formula and that the "protein tag" described in the definition of "Y'" is present on the "Protein" moiety shown in the formula. Applicants thank the Examiner for her helpful suggestions.

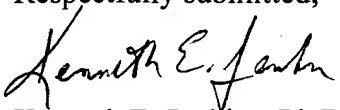
In light of the amendments to claim 26, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 858-350-6100.

Respectfully submitted,



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